

The Board of Commissioners of the City of Camden Redevelopment Agency met on Wednesday, May 2, 2012 at Camden City Hall, Council Chambers, 2nd Floor, 520 Market Street, Camden, New Jersey.

Chairman Vance Bowman called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM. Board Clerk Carla Rhodes called the roll.

Present: VB, GP, KH, BM, LQ, and JV
Absent: MS
Attendees: Saundra Ross Johnson, CRA; Carla Rhodes, CRA; Mark Asselta, Esq., Brown & Connery; Olivette Simpson, CRA; Johanna Conyer, CRA; James Harveson, CRA; Colandus "Kelly" Francis, NAACP; Frank Fullbrook, 211 Penn Street, and LaVerne Williams, 218 Branch Village

Ms. Rhodes advised the Board that, pursuant to the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice had been posted in the Courier Post and the Philadelphia Inquirer as well as in the Office of the City Clerk.

Review and Action for Minutes

Meeting Date	M	A	N	AB	Comments
March 29, 2012 April 26, 2012		VB GP KH BM LQ			The Minutes of the March 29, 2012 Camden Redevelopment Agency Board of Commissioners' Caucus and April 26 Special Meeting of the Camden Redevelopment Agency's Board of Commissioners were previously provided to the Commissioners. There were no comments or questions. On motions duly made and seconded, the Minutes were approved.

Executive Director's Report

Meeting Date	M	A	N	AB	Comments
May 2, 2012	GP KH	VB GP KH BM LQ			In addition to the previously provided Executive Director's report, Saundra Ross Johnson supplied a map as well as Property Lists and Project Descriptions for NSP2 development activity in Cooper Plaza, including the units known as Lanning Square West. She also noted the Independent Auditors' Report reflected no findings for the second consecutive year. She commended staff responsible (Finance Director Johanna Conyer, Controller Nural Williams, Housing Director Olivette Simpson, and Economic Development Director James Harveson).

Resolutions for Review and Action

At the request of Commissioner Jose Vazquez, due to a scheduling conflict, the most time-sensitive Resolution was presented first. Afterward, the vote was taken for Resolution 05-02-12D and the normal sequence resumed. Commissioner Vazquez departed at 6:05 PM. Commissioner Bryan Morton joined the meeting prior to the vote on Resolution D.

		M	A	N	AB	Comments
05-02-12A	Resolution Authorizing a Contract Between the Camden Redevelopment Agency and Camden Special Services District for Roosevelt Plaza Park- Park Maintenance (\$10,640.00)	LQ GP	VB GP KH BM LQ			Vice Chair Gloria Pena inquired about the purpose of the proposed contract. Mr. Harveson explained it is for routine maintenance. On motion duly made and seconded, this Resolution was approved.
05-02-12B	Resolution Authorizing the Camden Redevelopment Agency to Enter into an Amendment #2 to the Inter-local Services Agreement with the City of Camden for Development Management Services in Connection with the Roosevelt Plaza Project	GP LQ	VB GP KH BM LQ			There were no questions or comments. On motion duly made and seconded, this Resolution was approved.
05-02-12C	Resolution Authorizing the Camden Redevelopment Agency to Enter into a Professional Service Agreement with Environmental Resolutions, Inc. to Perform a Secondary Investigation of the APM Site in the Cramer Hill Neighborhood- American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (\$19,126.00)	LQ BM	VB GP KH BM LQ			There were no questions or comments. On motion duly made and seconded, this Resolution was approved.

05-02-12D	<p>Resolution Authorizing an Amendment to a Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2 ("NSP 2") Loan Commitment to Cramer Hill Community Development Corporation for the Berkeley Street Housing Project in the Amount of \$565,000</p>	<p>GP LQ</p>	<p>VB GP KH BM LQ</p>	<p>Commissioner Hagamin and Ms. Johnson noted a discrepancy in the title of the Resolution from that which was presented in the Caucus Agenda and the final version. Ms. Simpson explained the variance in the amount of the loan (from \$600,000 to \$565,000).</p> <p>The total loan amount is \$1,100,000.00. CRA will receive 4% interest on \$565,000.</p> <p>Chairman Bowman asked: What benefit is it to us to loan Cramer Hill Development Corporation (CHDC) the money?</p> <p>Ms. Conyer explained, although she didn't prepare the Resolution, she is familiar with the transaction. The benefits of loaning these funds to the non-profit developer were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It helps CRA in meeting the NSP2 spend down timeline and ▪ It affords CRA additional revenue to fun NSP2-approved activities beyond February 2013. <p>Ms. Simpson added there is no time limitation applicable to use of these loan proceeds (and interest) repaid to CRA.</p> <p>Vice Chair Pena inquired about how much revenue would be generated over the two-year loan period. Ms. Simpson explained \$24,000 would be earned in year one and \$24,000+ would be earned in year two, for a total of \$48,960. She also noted that documentation had previously been circulated certifying the recent sale of property by M&M Development for \$219,000 in Cooper Plaza.</p> <p>Chairman Bowman asked: Has this developer ever been responsible for a construction project (as opposed to a rehab project)? Ms. Simpson affirmed.</p> <p>Chairman Bowman also noted encountering difficulty in the past with achieving completion of construction projects with developers who lacked sufficient experience. He urged CRA staff to be mindful of this. Ms. Simpson informed the Board of CHDC Executive Director's long history of experience in construction in Philadelphia; he also previously completed a 14-unit sales project for CRA.</p> <p>On motion duly made and seconded, this Resolution was approved.</p>
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Chairperson's Remarks

None.

Public Comments

Chairman Bowman requested a motion to open the meeting for Public Comments. On a motion made by Vice Chair Pena and affirmed by all, the Public Comments Session commenced at 6:09 PM.

Mr. Frank Fullbrook of 211 Penn Street stated he was pleased to see progress at Roosevelt Plaza Park. He also inquired about the status of the RFP for the Pierre Building.

Ms. Johnson reported the CRA had received one response, and it had been assessed as non-responsive. She raised the possibility that uncertainty pertaining to the outcome of the pending merger of Rowan and Rutgers Universities may have caused the lack of response to the RFP. It will be re-issued at a later date.

Mr. Fullbrook expressed extreme disconcert with the merger proposal and called it a "crazy and harmful idea." He pointed out that the threat of the merger may also affect student enrollment, because students who qualify for enrollment at Rutgers Law are also likely to qualify for acceptance at nearby institutions like Temple, Villanova, and Widener. He reported the Acceptance Rate at Rutgers University Law School is down this year and stated, "if you dispose of the threat to Rutgers, interest (in development in the surrounding areas) may return."

Mr. Fullbrook also reported the new apartment building soon to open in Cooper Grant will include a street-level 7-Eleven store and a Subway sandwich shop.

Ms. LaVerne Williams of 218 Branch Village inquired about Resolution 05-02-12D. Specifically, she asked about the location of the property.

Chairman Bowman informed her the property is located Downtown. Ms. Simpson clarified: it is located in Cooper Plaza at Sixth and Berkeley Streets.

Regarding Resolution 05-02-12C, Ms. Williams inquired about when the first report was conducted. Mr. Harveson informed her additional investigation was required in connection with the discovery of a well on the premises and no additional expense would be incurred.

Ms. Williams asked about the cost of the first report. Mr. Harveson informed her the cost of the first report was about \$80,000.

Mr. Colandus "Kelly" Francis of the NAACP asked if NSP2 funds can be used for demolitions. Ms. Johnson affirmed (CRA has demolished 16 properties with NSP2 funds). He also inquired as to whether the NSP2 funds can be used for owner-occupied property. She informed him NSP2 funds cannot be used for owner-occupied properties.

Public Comments (cont'd.)

Following up on Mr. Fullbrook's comments, Mr. Francis noted the propensity for County initiatives implemented in Camden City to produce adverse effects. He recalled the takeover resulted in the City's deficit increasing from \$9.7 million to over \$60 million and asked: "Why should anyone believe anything the County wants done will be any different?"

Commissioner Morton added, what has been consistent with NSP2 projects is that they provide anchors for neighborhoods that facilitate additional development. He cited Respond, Inc.'s Meadows at Pyne Poynt as an example.

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

Executive Session

Chairman Bowman requested a motion for an Executive Session. On a motion made by Vice Chair Pena, seconded by Commissioner Quinones and affirmed by all, the Executive Session commenced at 6:26 PM. The meeting resumed at 7:39 PM.

Adjournment

On the motion of Chairman Bowman, seconded by Vice Chair Pena and Commissioner Hagamin, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM.

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